

college as it now exists. When the subject is mentioned, the thoughts of an Oxford man go back to an ancient dining-hall, a beautiful and noble room, hung round with old portraits of college worthies, in which all the members of the society are assembled at their meal, the fellows on the dais, the students at long tables down the room. Grace is said by the presiding fellow, and one of the scholars or junior members of the foundation, in a Latin form handed down from the Middle Ages. If it is a college festival, the "loving cup" goes round. Dinner over, the students retire to their own rooms, and there often make up parties of their own. The fellows withdraw to their "common room," where, while the wine is passed round after the fashion of the old country, the talk often runs on the affairs of the college and the characters, doings, and prospects of its junior members. The strength of corporate feeling and the attachment to the old house fostered by this system are valuable; still more valuable are the close personal relations and constant intercourse between tutor and pupil which it encourages, and upon which an old Oxford or Cambridge tutor often looks back with no common pleasure. The social bond between the undergraduate members of the college is also favourable to the formation of character and to friendship: perhaps it is partly the want of such a bond in the American universities that leads students to seek a substitute in the "secret societies." If the fellows marry, they must live separately with their families, and for the most part out of college, for the arrangement of the monastic building repels married life. There will then be an end of the college as a society; as a barrack it may remain; but as a barrack it will probably be a nuisance, for, in England at least, it would be scarcely possible to maintain discipline, or

even manners, among a large body of students rooming in the same building without the presence of the seniors. Still the quality of the teaching is the first object, and it can be secured only by the permanent devotion of the fellows, or such of them as constitute the college faculty, to their calling, with which the rule of celibacy fatally interferes. If the present commissioners can devise a mode of reconciling the improvement of the teaching with the preservation of the social life of a college, their ingenuity will deserve a crown.

2. The hideous system of religious tests imposed in Stuart times to keep the universities under the dominion of the State church has, after a protracted struggle, been removed: at least it has ceased to be compulsory; though we believe it is still legally open to the graduating student, if he thinks fit and has the clerical profession in view, to bind his conscience to formularies comprising several hundred propositions in theology, many of them controverted, before he has had time to form any well-grounded opinion. The university of Laud and Sheldon is now open to "Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics," all of whom have taken advantage of the concessions, for the heir of the late Khedive was a student at Oxford. The major part of the fellowships has also been thrown open to laymen. But the remainder of the fellowships, amounting in some colleges to a moiety of the whole number, and all the headships except two or three remain tenable only by clergymen of the Church of England. In the Middle Ages everything literary was clerical; so that when a mediæval founder enjoined his fellows to take orders at a certain standing, he in no way prejudiced the literary objects of his foundation. But at the Reformation, literature, and science with it, passed in the main to the laity: the